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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

DODDS, HAROLD E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2177

DATE MAILED: 11/05/2003

17

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/419,327

Applicant(s)

JENKINS, STEVEN R.

Examiner

Harold E. Dodds, Jr.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 September 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The revised formal drawings were received on 8 September 2003. These drawings are accepted.

Specification

2. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 7, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,512), Seybold (U.S. Patent No. 5,877,758), and Robinson (U.S. Patent No. 5,918,014).

5. Boden rendered obvious independent claim 1 by the following:

"...logging on..." at col. 1, lines 46-49.

"...configuring an appearance..." at col. 13, lines 7-9 and col. 13, lines 26-28.

"...viewing, adding, or modifying items of information..." at col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7.

"...pertaining to one or more clients..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...specifying identifying information for a client..." at col. 7, lines 44-49 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...specifying information..." at col. 7, lines 44-49.

"...of the client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...conceptually links a plurality of related items..." at col. 21, lines 66-67, col. 22, lines 1-3, and col. 13, lines 30-33.

"...and the specified information is applicable to each of the plurality of items..." at col. 7, lines 44-47, col. 19, lines 1-5, and col. 13, lines 30-33.

"...of the client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...identifying a user group having some level of authorization..." at col. 7, lines 44-47, col. 4, lines 66-67, and col. 15, lines 1-3.

"... viewing, adding, or modifying further comprises..." at col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7.

"...selecting a client..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...in connection with the selected client..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...for the selected client..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...selecting a user..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 5, lines 8-18.

"...displaying only items for which the selected user has been designated..." at col. 13, lines 26-28 and col. 7, lines 44-47.

"...configuring and said viewing, adding, or modifying..." at col. 13, lines 7-9, col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7.

"...performed via an Internet web site.." at col. 23, lines 58-67 and col. 24, lines 1-5.

Boden does not teach the use of collaborative management applications, the use of clients, the use of user groups, the use of levels of authorization, the use of components, the use of categories, the use of groups of matters, and the use of filters.

6. However, Seybold teaches the use of collaborative management applications and components as follows:

"...to the collaborative management application..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

"...of the collaborative management application..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

"...selecting a component..." at col. 7, lines 53-55 and col. 5, lines 42-45.

"...for the component..." at col. 5, lines 42-45.

"...selecting a component in connection..." at col. 7, lines 53-55 and col. 5, lines 42-45.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use a collaborative management application to consolidate, coordinate, and track team activity. Likewise, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use components for organizing information for the convenience of the user.

Seybold does not teach the use of subject matters, the use of levels of authorization, the use of categories, the use of groups of matters, and the use of filters.

7. However, Robinson teaches the use of subject matter groups, categories, and filters as follows:

"...for at least one matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...wherein the at least one matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...selecting one or more matters..." col. 5, lines 32-33..

"...one or more matters comprise a group of matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...with the selected group of matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...selecting a filter for filtering items..." at col. 4, lines 25-27.

"...matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...in connection with all matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...displaying the filtered items to a user..." at col. 19, lines 18-23.

"...specifying at least one category..." at col. 7, lines 7-11

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use matters and groups of matters and categories for organizing information and to have the use of filters to exclude information outside of these filters in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

8. As per claim 7, the "...assigning an authorization level to each user of the user group..." is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67, col. 5, lines 1-3, and col. 7, lines 44-47.

9. As per claim 8, the "...modifying the authorization level of a user of the user group..." is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67, col. 5, lines 1-3, and col. 7, lines 44-47,
the "...in connection with at least one matter..." is taught by Robinson at col. 5, lines 32-33,
and the "...of the client..." is taught by Boden at col. 10, lines 18-20.

10. Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, and Robinson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Evans et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,784,6191) and Gore (U.S. Patent No. 5,873,095).

As per claim 2, the "...adding an item to a component"....and "...specifying a status of said added item..." are not taught by either Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Evans teaches the adding of items to components as follows:

"...an item may be added to a notebook component by dragging it directly into a notebook window from any system component, such as a network browser, in accordance with the embedding procedure described herein..." at col. 16, lines 5-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to add items to components in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

Evan did not teach the specifying of a status for the added items.

However, Gore teaches the setting of a status as follows:

"...Locator application 22 provides a user with the ability to set his current status, to view the current status of another employee, and to view a list of employees having a given status..." at col. 2, lines 57-60.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to assign statuses to added items in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 3, the "...changing a status of said added item..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Gore teaches the changing of a status as follows:

"...To change his current status using status window application 24, the employee can select and change status icon 102 until status icon 102 corresponds to the desired status..." at col. 6, lines 51-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to change statuses of items in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 4, "...changing a status of said added item comprises selecting an icon associated with said item status..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Gore teaches the use of icons for changing of a status as follows:

"...To change his current status using status window application 24, the employee can select and change status icon 102 until status icon 102 corresponds to the desired status..." at col. 6, lines 51-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to use icons for changing statuses of items for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 5, the "...selecting an item status and displaying only items having a status corresponding to the selected item status..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Gore teaches the displaying of items having a selected status as follows:

"...If a list is desired, then, in step 88, the locator application queries the database and displays a list of employees having a status matching the queried status..." at col. 6, lines 6-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify a status and to obtaining a list of items having the specified status for the convenience of the user.

11. Claims 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, Evans, and Gore as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Vaughn (U.S. Patent No. 4,800,590) and Lindholm (U.S. Patent No. 6,108,754).

As per claim 12, the "...item status is selected from a group consisting of hot issue, in progress, and done..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, Evans, or Gore.

However, Vaughn teaches the use of the concept "hot Issue" as follows:

The problem of computer security has become a very hot issue recently, with the movie "War Games" and the problems with "hackers" finding their way into time-shared computer systems..." at col. 1, lines 51-54.

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It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify the status of an issue as "hot issue" in order to indicate that immediate action is required.

Vaughn does not teach the use of statuses of in-progress or done.

However, Lindholm teaches the use of statuses of in-progress or done as follows:

"...The garbage collector would have done so because it had determined that, except for the in-progress reference being set to refer to the object, the synchronization construct meets the termination criteria..." at col. 18, lines 23-27.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify the status of an issue as "in progress" or "done" as well as "hot issue" in order to indicate the progress of processing issues.

12. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, and Robinson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Graham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,044,138), Gabbe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,550,965), Sanschagrin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,295,540), and Smalley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,067,549).

As per claim 6, the "...group consisting of a status component...",
the "...an outside service provider notes...",
the "...a client notes...",
the "...a checklist...",
the "...critical dates..."

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the "...only users identified as outside service provider users can modify outside service provider notes items....,"

and the "...only users identified as client users can modify client notes items....," are not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson.

However, Graham teaches the use of outside service provider notes as follows:

"...Upon selection of the client, the means 60 is initiated and a screen is displayed permitting or requesting the service provider to enter comments to be associated with the matter/call..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow outside service providers to enter comments for convenience and the allow modification of those comments by the same outside service providers in order to maintain integrity of these comments.

Graham does not teach the use of client notes, statuses, checklists, and critical dates.

However, Gabbe teaches the use of client notes as follows:

"...The annotating process in block 506 accepts client notes 514, event data 106, media representations 202, and the table of contents 302 as input. Client notes 514 are ancillary data 530 which is entered by manually typing characters into the keyboard or by semi-automatically highlighting a textual entry with a pointing device..." at col. 13, lines 45-50.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow clients to enter comments for convenience and the allow modification of those comments by the same clients in order to maintain integrity of these comments.

Graham does not teach the use of statuses, checklists, and critical dates.

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However, Sanschagrin teaches the use of statuses and critical dates as follows:

"...The inventory information or equivalent that can be retrieved from INM 11 include, for example, location/relay rack terminal identification (TID) information, hierarchy human equipment catalogue inventory group (HECIG) information, plug-in type information such as human equipment catalogue items (HECI), slot ID, and NE assignment status (in-service or not in-service)..." at col. 4, lines 54-60.

"...The TIRKS system allows users to automatically log, route, and monitor the progress of work orders (WO), perform end-to-end circuit design based on generic specifications and automated scripts, view and maintain an accurate, up-to-date inventory of all facilities and equipment and their assignments, execute interactive, user-defined queries and generate customized reports of work center activity, critical dates, and jeopardy conditions; and interface seamlessly with other Bellcore operations support systems..." at col. 1, lines 31-40.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use statuses and critical dates as components for convenience.

Sanschagrin does not teach the use of checklists.

However, Smalley teaches the use of checklists as follows:

"...This greatly expanded complement of shared software and data tables includes, in addition to the features of the regulated entity master file system 20, joint-usage capabilities for definition and description of the subject items comprising a regulated entity; data file creation and access; work activity scheduling and tracking; permit development; creation of inspection checklists and recording of inspection results; data entry of sample analysis results from environmental monitoring; automated determination of exceedances of pollution limits; automated determination of delinquent submittals and actions; preparation of enforcement documents; fee assessment; and billing...." at col. 7, lines 56-67.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use checklists as components for convenience.

13. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, and Robinson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Hunt et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,253,234).

As per claim 9, the "...Internet web site...", is taught by Boden at col. 23, lines 58-67 and col. 24, lines 1-5, the "...group consisting of the client...", is taught by Boden at col. 8, lines 12-14 and col. 10, lines 18-20, but the "...is maintained by a party selected from the group consisting...and an outside service provider..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Hunt teaches the maintaining of Internet web sites by service providers as follows:

"...Another problem relates to the fees charged by service providers for maintaining a Web site..." at col. 2, lines 35-36.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use either clients or service providers of these clients to maintain Internet Web sites in order to promote system flexibility and convenience.

14. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, and Robinson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Yianilos et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,321,609).

As per claim 10, the "...filter corresponds to a time period and wherein the filtered items comprise items edited during the time period corresponding to the filter...", is not taught by Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Yianilos teaches the use of a filter for a time period as follows:

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"...In order to enable a useful selection of relevant articles, these filter parameters are set forth in four Groups, namely, "Article Type", "Location", "Subject", and "Time Period."..., " at col. 2, lines 7-10.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use time period filters to include only information inside of these time periods in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

15. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Yianilos as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Leon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,317,025).

As per claim 11, the "...filtered items comprise all items added to the component since the items were last viewed..." is not taught by Boden, Seybold, Huang, Robinson, or Yianilos.

However, Leon teaches the use of items entered after a time as follows:

"...These defaults are automatically included when the items are added to the data base..." at col. 21, lines 38-39.

"...Get new number of seconds to lock out keypad less than 12 hours (keypad lockout means the keypad is disabled and cannot be used until reenabled after a preset programmed elapsed time period, the lockout occurring in response to entering of invalid login, for example)..." at col. 12, lines 22-26.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use time period filters to include only information after these time periods in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

16. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, and Robinson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Evans and Weiser (U.S. Patent No. 5,920,404).

As per claim 13, the "...designating a user..." is taught by Boden at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 5, lines 8-18, the "...adding an item to a component..." and "...automatically generating an E-mail..." are not taught by Boden, Seybold, Huang, or Robinson.

However, Evans teaches the adding of items to components as follows:

"...an item may be added to a notebook component by dragging it directly into a notebook window from any system component, such as a network browser, in accordance with the embedding procedure described herein..." at col. 16, lines 5-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to add items to components in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

Evans does not teach the automatic generation of an E-mail message.

However, Weiser teaches the automatic generation of an E-mail message as follows:

"...Document routing module 64 can then generate and communicate an e-mail message containing the location of the file to the user identified in the communications field via e-mail translation service 66..." at col. 8, lines, 12-15.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to automatically generate E-mail notices and to send them to designated users in order to notify the users of changes to pending items.

17. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, and Robinson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Horvitz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,864,848), Weiser, and Shaw et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,199,106).

As per claim 14, the "...user selection of an E-mail icon associated with one of the displayed items....,"
the "...displaying at least one E-mail group for the selected client, the at least one E-mail group comprising a list of users for receiving E-mail messages....,"
the "...sending the E-mail message to the selected users....,"
the "...collaborative management application automatically filling in a subject field of the E-mail message with a description of the associated item....," are not taught by either Boden, Seybold, or Robinson.

However, Horvitz teaches the use of icons for E-mail messages as follows:

"...At a convenient point in time for reading e-mail, the user may select an e-mail icon on a menu bar to activate the e-mail program 36..." at col. 19, lines 41-43.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to use icons for activating E-mail programs for the convenience of the user.

Horvitz does not teach the use of lists of E-mail message users or the automatic filling in of the E-mail subject.

However, Weiser teaches the automatic generation of an E-mail message as follows:

"...Document routing module 64 can then generate and communicate an e-mail message containing the location of the file to the user identified in the communications field via e-mail translation service 66..." at col. 8, lines, 12-15.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to provide the user with the means of selecting a set of E-mail recipients from a list of E-mail addresses and sending an E-mail message to the designated recipients for user convenience.

Weiser does not teach the automatically filling in the subject field on an E-mail message.

However, Shaw teaches the automatically filling in the subject field on an E-mail message as follows:

"...If "mail <recipient e-mail > <subject line>" is defined as the action to be performed, the client computer switches to the "write" screen, automatically filling in the address and the subject of an e-mail message..." at col. 16, lines 30-33.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to automatically fill in the subject field on an E-mail message in order to provide a set of uniform subject field entries for the E-mail messages.

18. Claims 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clements (U.S. Patent No. 6,182,080), Hunt, Boden, and Robinson.

19. Clements rendered obvious independent claim 15 by the following:

"...instructions for accessing a repository..." at col. 6, lines 12-16 and col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...the repository for storing a plurality of documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...a first graphical interface ..." at col. 4, lines 47-51.

"...by which a first user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...can add one or more documents to the repository..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...for each document..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...a plurality of related documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...is applicable to each of the plurality of documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...instructions..." at col. 6, lines 12-16.

"...one or more users..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...an email interface..." at col. 3, lines 16-18.

"...linked to the first graphical interface..." at col. 4, lines 47-51.

"...the email interface including a list of potential email recipients..." at col. 3, lines 16-18.

"...a second graphical interface..." at col. 4, lines 47-51.

"...by which a second user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...and can access one or more of the documents in the repository..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...for the one or more documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...and instructions..." at col. 6, lines 12-16.

"...for allowing the second user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...any one of the documents in the repository..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...of the second user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

Clements does not teach the use of service providers, the use of categories, the use of authorizations, the use of matters, the use of clients, the logging on to network applications, and the viewing, adding, or modifying documents.

20. However, Hunt teaches the use of service providers and the use of network application programs as follows:

"...associated with the service provider..." at col. 4, lines 11-13.

"...the network application..." at col. 4, lines 13-16.

"...the network application..." at col. 4, lines 13-16.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use service providers to maintain Internet Web sites in order to promote system flexibility and convenience for the users. Likewise, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow users to use network application programs in order to make maximum use of the networks' capabilities.

Hunt does not teach the use of categories, the use of authorizations, the use of matters, the use of clients, the logging on to applications, and the viewing, adding, or modifying documents.

21. However, Boden teaches the use of categories, the use of authorizations, the use of clients, the logging on to applications and the viewing, adding, or modifying documents as follows:

"...can log into..." at col. 1, lines 46-49.

"...and can assign a category, and authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...wherein the matter conceptually links..." at col. 21, lines 66-67 and col. 22, lines 1-3.

"...for identifying one or more clients..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...each client comprising..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...having a level of authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...of the client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...selected according to at least one client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...the category..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...associated with a client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...can log into..." at col. 12, lines 21-23.

"...based on the category..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...to view, add, or modify..." at col. 12, lines 56-61 and col. 17, lines 44-47.

"...according to the authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to log on to network applications and to use these applications to view, add, or modify documents in order to provide users access to these applications and have the capability to view, add, or modify documents residing on a system at a remote site to gain acceptance for use of this system. Likewise, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use

authorization and categories of subjects in order to designate the system use privileges of each of the users and exclude other user from accessing these categories.

Boden does not teach the use of matters.

22. However, Robinson teaches the use of matters as follows:

"...and a matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...and information associated with the matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...with respect to matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...and the matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...and matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...with respect to a particular matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use matters for organizing information.

23. As per claim 16, the "...the second graphical interface..." is taught by Clements at col. 4, lines 47-51,
the "...includes instructions..." is taught by Clements at col. 6, lines 12-16,
the "...for allowing the second user..." is taught by Clements at col. 5, lines 1-2,
the "...to view, add, or modify..." is taught by Boden at col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7,
the "...any one of the documents in the repository by..." is taught by Clements at col. 2, lines 25-29,
the "...using a first filter for filtering items..." is taught by Robinson at col. 4, lines 25-27,
the "...for the client..." is taught by Boden at col. 10, lines 18-20,

the "...and the matter...", is taught by Robinson at col. 5, lines 32-33,
the "...and using a second filter for filtering items...", is taught by Robinson at col. 4,
lines 25-27,
the "...for which the second user...", is taught by Clements at col. 5, lines 1-2,
and the "...has authorization...", is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines
1-3.

24. As per claim 17, the "...the list of potential email recipients...", is taught by
Clements at col. 3, lines 16-18,
the "...is selected according to the client...", is taught by Smith at col. 11, lines 56-59,
the "...the category...", is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3,
and the "...and the matter...", is taught by Robinson at col. 5, lines 32-33.

25. As per claim 18, the "...the service provider...", is taught by Hunt at col. 4,
lines 11-13
and the "...is a law firm...", is taught by Smith at col. 11, lines 56-59.

Response to Arguments

26. Applicant's arguments filed 13 December 2002 have been fully considered
but they are not persuasive. In the first argument for independent claim 1 on page 8,
paragraph 5, the Applicant states as follows:

"The case law forbids this type of combination by requiring that there must be evidence
that a skilled artisan, confronted with the same problems as the inventor and with no
knowledge of the claimed invention, would select the elements from the cited prior art
references for combination in the manner claimed. It is also clear that a rejection cannot
be predicated on the mere identification of individual components of claimed limitations.
Rather, particular findings must be made as to the reason the skilled artisan, with no
knowledge of the claimed invention, would have selected these components for
combination in the manner claimed. *Ecolchem Inc. v. Southern California Edison*, 56

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USPQ2d 1065, 1076 (Fed. Cir. 2000). Applicant respectfully submits that no such findings have been presented in the Office action to support the combination of references."

The Boden, Seybold, and Robinson references come from related technologies.

Boden, Seybold, Robinson teach the use of computers, the use of networks, the viewing and updating of data, the use of information, the use of users of the system, and the use of applications and Boden and Robinson teach the use of databases and the use of logging on. It is clear, that the references of Boden, Seybold, and Robinson use similar technologies. Furthermore, Seybold describes a collaborative management tool as follows:

"...The preferred embodiment of the present invention is represented by the "TEAM MANAGER" program, which is an application program published by Microsoft Corporation of Redmond, Wash. Briefly described, the preferred program, which is represented in FIG. 1 as application program 37a, is a collaborative management tool that consolidates, coordinates, and tracks team activity. The program allows a user to consolidate, coordinate and track a project team's information such as the amount of work completed, or actual work, on an assignment. For example, the preferred program allows users to enter information describing available resources and tasks, and then generates a schedule based on the input information. Advantageously, the preferred program utilizes an assignment-oriented approach for generating a schedule, which results in maximizing the utilization of resources. The preferred application program presents a graphical user interface (GUI), and operates in tandem with the "WINDOWS 95" operating system, which is published by Microsoft Corporation of Redmond, Wash. This gives the user visual access to resource and task data, and direct ways to view and manipulate information..." at col. 6, lines 60-67 and col. 7, lines 1-14.

This description of a collaborative management tool describes a tool, which could be used for the control of processing of documents. The user would have to log on to

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the system and the graphical user interface could be used to configure the appearance of the application. A project does not have to be limited to a single company, but it may involve a group of companies or even include clients of the companies. The tracking of a project team's information could include the processing of documents and the system would require a database to maintain the project information and the documents. A collaborative management tool would by necessity group related items and provide a means to limit access to sensitive portions of the information to only those users that are authorized to view or to modify the documents.

27. In the second argument for independent claim 1 on page 9, paragraph 3, the Applicant states as follows:

"Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that the Office action simply takes bits and pieces of information from each reference and pieces them together like a jigsaw puzzle using the Applicant's disclosure as a blueprint. However, the case law makes it clear that the best defense against hindsight-based obviousness analysis is the rigorous application of the requirement for a showing of a teaching or motivation to combine the prior art references."

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). The response to the first argument has shown the a collaborative management tool as taught by Seybold could be used to suggest many of the elements used by Boden such as log on to the

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system, configuring the appearance of the application, participation by clients, viewing, adding, and modifying documents, and selectively limiting the viewing and modifying of the documents to a specified individual or groups of individuals. Likewise, the use of a collaborative management tool would suggest the defining of categories and the selection of groups of subject matter taught by Robinson.

28. In the third argument for claims 2-14 on page 10, paragraph 2, the Applicant states as follows:

"Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the cited references for at least the reasons stated above. Claims 2-14 depend from and further limit claim 1 and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1."

Since the responses to the first and second arguments render obvious independent claim 1, claims 2-14 depend on independent claim 1, and no further arguments have been provided for these claims, claims 2-14 are rendered obvious by the responses to the first and second arguments.

29. In the fourth argument for independent claim 15 on page 10, paragraph 4, the Applicant states as follows:

"As stated previously, according to MPEP § 2143.01, obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either explicitly or implicitly in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination."

The Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson references come from related technologies. Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson teach the use of computers, the use of databases, the use of networks, the updating of data, the use of information, the use of

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users of the system, and the use of applications and Clements, Boden, and Robinson teach the viewing of data, the use of categories, and the use of documents. It is clear, that the Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson references use similar technologies. Furthermore, Clements teaches the use of computer application programs at col. 1, lines 47-49 and the use of the computer in various network environments at col. 7, lines 26-39. The combination of these two teachings would suggest the use of network applications as taught by Hunt. Likewise, Clements teaches the use of the document "COM and ActiveX object services" in the Microsoft platform software development kit at col. 14, lines 45-47, which suggest the use of a service provider. Clements teaches the use of security features and authorized actions at col. 9, lines 8-14, which suggest the logging on and authorization features of the teaching of Boden. Clements also teaches the grouping of various documents together at col. 2, lines 23-35, which suggests the assignment of these documents to one or more categories, which in turn suggest the assignment of categories teaching of Boden. Clements teaches the viewing or editing of documents at col. 4, lines 45-47, which suggests the teaching of viewing, adding, or modifying documents taught by Bodin. Finally, Clements teaches the "subject of an envelope" at col. 14, lines 20-31, which suggests the concept of the teaching of matters by Robinson.

30. In the fifth argument for independent claim 15 on page 12, paragraph 2, the Applicant states as follows:

"Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that the Office action simply takes bits and pieces of information from each reference and pieces them together like a jigsaw puzzle using the Applicant's disclosure as a blueprint. However, the case law makes it clear that the best defense against hindsight-based obviousness analysis is the rigorous

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application of the requirement for a showing of a teaching or motivation to combine the prior art references."

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). The response to the fourth argument shows that the teachings of Clements, which suggest the teachings of Hunt, Boden, and Robinson that are combined with Clements.

31. In the sixth argument for claims 16-18 on page 10, paragraph 4, the Applicant states as follows:

"Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 is allowable over the cited references for at least the reasons stated above. Claims 16-18 depend from and further limit claim 15 and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 15."

Since the responses to the fourth and fifth arguments render obvious independent claim 15, claims 16-18 depend on independent claim 15, and no further arguments have been provided for these claims, claims 16-18 are rendered obvious by the responses to the fourth and fifth arguments.

Conclusion

32. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harold E. Dodds, Jr. whose telephone number is

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(703)-305-1802. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E. Breene can be reached on (703)-305-9790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)-305-3900.

Harold E. Dodds, Jr.

Harold E. Dodds, Jr.
Patent Examiner
November 3, 2003


GRETA ROBINSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER